

National Accreditation Council

for Agencies Serving the Blind
and Visually Handicapped

10 Years of Progress 1967-1976

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A. Z.

Ten years ago in the Fall of 1966 I had the thrill of helping to bring a new organization into existence.

Many blind and sighted Americans had worked together for years toward the day when we would have objective standards for the management and services of agencies for the blind—and a system for applying those standards.

Mary E. Switzer, who had made rehabilitation a major public concern, encouraged us and supported our efforts.

All major organizations of and for blind people, plus other groups and individuals, shared in our undertaking.

Then, as 1967 began, the new organization opened its doors. It was called the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped.

Its aim was a better break for all blind people and better accountability for funds spent for services to the blind.

(continued on next page)

What has happened in these ten years because of NAC?

I am fortunate in being able to speak from a unique vantage point.

I was present at NAC's creation, and served on NAC's first Board of Directors. Then followed some years in which the press of other business kept me from being active in NAC.

Today I am once again part of this movement —as I always have been in spirit.

I know that, because of NAC, more than 300,000 men, women and children are getting better services and having a greater voice in how those services are provided.

I have observed the relationship between NAC and blind people become stronger and deeper. Policies and practices to foster that relationship have been built into the basic structure of NAC.

Agencies for the blind are becoming more aware of what the standards can mean to them and the people they serve.

It isn't easy to become accredited. We never thought it would be—or accreditation wouldn't be worth much. But I have seen an agency that didn't make it the first time try and try again until it could meet the standards.

And I have heard board members of leading agencies say: "We knew we were good—but our self-study showed us how we could be better."

Public understanding of NAC has begun to grow.

NAC is not a highly visible agency. Our modest budget helps agencies throughout the country give better service and become more accountable to taxpayers and contributors. Accredited agencies deserve the spotlight in their communities. But everyone benefits when the public knows what

NAC is. An informed public will encourage and help agencies to qualify for accreditation — and give more generous support to those that measure up.

Just in the past year NAC has taken steps to increase public understanding of its work. In this we have the warm cooperation of our friends and members.

The base of NAC's support has broadened.

When NAC was founded, its principal support came from the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) and the federal government. Today AFB continues its support and a number of foundations, corporations, and individuals are helping too.

Soon after NAC was founded, Mary E. Switzer, then administrator, Social and Rehabilitation Service, DHEW, said:

"I . . . have taken a particular pleasure in lending my support to the very worthwhile activities of your organization. We . . . shall be looking forward to the day when accreditation is a routine process for every agency serving the blind in this country."

I had the privilege of working with Mary Switzer for many years. Her dreams had a way of coming true — because she dreamed of helping the handicapped people of America help themselves.

As we enter NAC's second ten years, our goal must be to fulfill Mary's vision in every respect. Quality services, attested by an objective system of accreditation, should be routinely expected and demanded by all blind persons and by the American public.

LOUIS H. RIVES, JR.
President

For *Highlights 1967-76* see page 6.

Continuing Progress

In the past 12 months, 18 agencies and schools have qualified for reaccreditation. In every case the visiting team found that important changes had been made as a result of recommendations at the time of original accreditation. If such changes are not apparent, reaccreditation is not granted.

For example:

Many agencies established better management controls and public accountability.

Working conditions in sheltered workshops were improved, as were safety practices in schools, workshops, and general agencies.

Instructional materials were upgraded and more opportunities for broader life experiences were provided to students in residential schools.

A host of improvements were observed in mobility training, social services, vocational services, and involvement of blind people in planning and carrying out their own rehabilitation programs.

The steady flow of reaccreditations is one more indication that the system is doing what it is supposed to do—providing stimulation for *continuing improvement* in a regular management cycle or review, evaluation, and constructive changes.

Keeping Standards Up To Date

Any system of accreditation is only as good as its standards. Therefore NAC in the past year continued the systematic review and revision of standards for management and services.

Completed are revisions of *Standards for Physical Facilities, Vocational Services, Workshop Services, and Accounting for Services and Finances*.

Work is going forward on revision of *Standards for Rehabilitation Teaching, Orientation and Mobility Instruction, and Function and Structure*.

The last-listed standards are particularly im-

portant today. An agency's ability to provide quality services to blind persons — in fact, the very existence of effective special services for blind people — may depend on how an agency's function is defined, what kind of structure it has, and, if it is part of a larger organization, how it is perceived and placed in that organization's structure.

Revision of this particular set of standards has attracted unusually wide participation because so many knowledgeable leaders recognize the standards' basic importance.

Sponsoring Members and Supporters

NAC became a reality because so many persons in the field of services for the blind and other responsible citizen leaders wanted a practical way to improve programs and safeguard public funds spent for those programs.

The original National Conference on Standards was sponsored by such groups as American Association of Instructors for the Blind (now Association for Education of the Visually Handicapped); American Council of the Blind; American Foundation for the Blind; National Industries for the Blind; National Society for the Prevention of Blindness.

Today these organizations continue as Sponsors or Supporters of NAC, along with such others

as the American Association of Workers for the Blind, National Braille Association and more than half a dozen more.

NAC's policies, procedures, and standards are developed with the participation of national and local groups in all parts of our country. Input from all interested persons is sought.

Thanks to the involvement of literally thousands of men and women, blind and sighted, NAC standards express a consensus about what agencies should be providing — for and with the people they serve.

NAC is deeply grateful to all those who work with it in constantly renewing this consensus.

Purpose of the National Accreditation Council

To improve services for blind and visually handicapped men, women and children by developing standards for specialized agencies and schools for the blind; to assist such agencies and schools to utilize, adopt,

and implement the standards through a national system of accreditation which gives public recognition to organizations that are in substantial compliance with the standards.

Suggested Form of Bequest

I give and bequeath to the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation located in New York, N.Y., the sum of dollars (\$.....) to be used by the Council's Board as deemed advisable within the corporate powers of such Council.

Suggested Form of Gift

I hereby give to the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation located in New York, N.Y., the sum of dollars (\$.....) to be used for the general purposes of the Council at the direction of its Board of Directors.

Statement of Support, Revenue, and Expenses and Changes in Fund Balances

Year Ended June 30, 1976

	Current Funds		
	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted
Public support and revenue:			
Contributions	\$198,685	\$195,661	\$3,024
Revenue:			
Assessments and dues —			
member units	28,300	28,300	
Interest	7,030	7,030	
Publication sales	2,456	2,456	
Total revenue	37,786	37,786	
Total public support and revenue	\$236,471	233,447	3,024
Expenses:			
Program services:			
Develop standards	\$ 14,570	14,570	
Promulgate standards	72,716	72,216	500
Accreditation	78,091	78,091	
Total program services	165,377	164,877	500
Supporting services:			
Management and general	43,854	42,854	1,000
Fund raising	37,116	35,592	1,524
Total supporting services	80,970	78,446	2,524
Total expenses	\$246,347	243,323	3,024
Excess of expenses over public support and revenue		(9,876)	—
Fund balances:			
Beginning of year		119,746	
End of year		\$109,870	\$ -0-

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Notes to Financial Statements — June 30, 1976

1—Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Investments are stated at cost.

Pledges of contributions are recognized in the accompanying statements as they are received.

Expenditures for fixed assets are not capitalized and depreciated over the useful lives of the assets acquired, but are charged directly to expense. The revised *Standards of Accounting and Financial Reporting for Voluntary Health and Welfare Organizations* recommend the capitalization of fixed assets, if material. The amounts involved in fixed asset transactions are not significant.

All contributions are considered available for unrestricted use, unless specifically restricted by the donor.

No amounts for donated materials or services have been reflected in the accompanying financial statements. The amount of donated materials is not significant and no objective basis is available to measure the value of donated services.

2—Board-Designated Long-Term Investment

In prior years, the Board designated funds in the aggregate amount of \$108,989 for long-term investment. In accordance with the revised *Standards of Accounting and Financial Reporting for Voluntary Health and Welfare Organizations*, the Council is reporting such funds as a part of current funds—unrestricted.

3—Materials for Sale or Use

Materials for sale or use are reported as assets at the lower of cost or market. In prior periods, the cost of such materials was charged to expense as the material was purchased. The

current method is in conformity with the revised *Standards of Accounting and Financial Reporting for Voluntary Health and Welfare Organizations*. The balance at June 30, 1976 represents only items purchased in the current year. Material on hand at the beginning of the year was not significant. The effect on the statement of support, revenue, and expenses and changes in fund balances for the year ended June 30, 1976 is a reduction in expense and an increase in fund balances in the amount of \$1,365.

4—Restricted Contributions

Restricted contributions totaled \$3,024 for the year ended June 30, 1976. This amount was received from various donors to defray the cost of meetings and conferences.

5—Pension Plan

The Council participates in the National Health and Welfare Association pension plan, the costs of which are borne by the employer. The plan covers all employees over 25 years of age with more than one year of service. The total expense to the Council for the year ended June 30, 1976 was \$4,596. There are no prior service costs. A contribution of \$4,000 was also made to a special retirement account for a former executive director.

6—Leased Premises

The minimum rental under the lease for the Council's office space is \$15,000 per annum (commencing March 1, 1975), excluding payments for real estate taxes and utilities. Such rental costs aggregated \$17,714 for the year ended June 30, 1976. The present lease expires on June 30, 1978.

Statement of Functional Expenses

Year Ended June 30, 1976

	Total	Program Services			Supporting Services	
		Standards		Accreditation	Management and General	Fund Raising
		Develop	Promulgate			
Salaries	\$146,406	\$ 9,076	\$43,695	\$52,670	\$18,484	\$22,481
Employee health and retirement benefits (Note 5)	13,308	558	2,798	3,356	5,101	1,495
Payroll taxes	8,620	517	2,586	3,103	1,035	1,379
Total salaries and related expenses	168,334	10,151	49,079	59,129	24,620	25,355
Occupancy	17,714	1,127	5,594	6,678	1,364	2,951
Telephone and telegraph	6,911	446	2,164	2,672	575	1,054
Conferences, conventions, meetings and travel	22,000	613	7,386	3,240	9,049	1,712
Professional fees and contract service payments	13,227	560	792	1,551	6,973	3,351
Equipment and other fixed assets	626	38	183	220	91	94
Outside printing, art work etc.	6,788	1,030	4,073	1,060	58	567
Postage and shipping	2,701	167	1,021	894	193	426
Dues, subscriptions, and reference publications	726	805	31	39	118	538
Supplies	6,515	429	1,957	2,544	550	1,035
Miscellaneous	805	9	436	64	263	33
Total functional expenses	<u>\$246,347</u>	<u>\$14,570</u>	<u>\$72,716</u>	<u>\$78,091</u>	<u>\$43,854</u>	<u>\$37,116</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Balance Sheet

June 30, 1976

Assets

Current funds—unrestricted:	
Cash (including \$108,989 designated by the Governing Board for long-term investment—Note 2)	\$114,322
Accounts receivable	5,588
Pledges receivable	1,200
Materials for sale or use— at cost or market, whichever is lower (Note 3)	1,365
Prepaid expenses	1,178
Total current funds—unrestricted	<u>\$123,653</u>

Liabilities and Fund Balances

Current funds—unrestricted:	
Accounts payable	\$ 5,959
Deferred revenue	7,824
	<u>13,783</u>
Fund balances:	
Designated by the Governing Board for long-term investment	108,989
Undesignated—for general activities	881
Total fund balances	<u>109,870</u>
Total current funds—unrestricted	<u>\$123,653</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

To the Board of Directors
National Accreditation Council
for Agencies Serving the
Blind and Visually Handicapped
New York, New York

We have examined the balance sheet of National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped as of June 30, 1976 and the related statements of support, revenue, and expenses and changes in fund balances and of functional expenses for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

New York, N.Y., July 30, 1976

In our opinion, the financial statements identified above present fairly the financial position of National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped at June 30, 1976, and the results of its operations and the changes in its fund balances for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year, except for the change, with which we concur, in the method of recording the cost of materials for sale, as described in Note 3 to the financial statements.

HURDMAN and CRANSTOUN, Certified Public Accountants

Highlights

1967-1976

1967 NAC began operations; Arthur L. Brandon, previously chairman, Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services for the Blind (COMSTAC), president.

Commission on Standards and Commission on Accreditation established.

1968 *Self-Study and Evaluation Guides* for agencies, schools and sheltered workshops published.

First three agencies accredited.

1969 Tested and expanded *Self-Study and Evaluation Guide for Residential Schools*.

Began to develop standards for production of braille, large-print and recorded reading materials.

Began NAC Award for outstanding leadership in strengthening standards of services to the blind.

Accredited agencies—11.

1970 First NAC Awards to Mary E. Switzer and Jansen Noyes, Jr., president, American Foundation for the Blind (AFB).

Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) called on facilities providing services to clients of state agencies to qualify for accreditation. NAC designated as accrediting organization for agencies for the blind.

More than 200 persons had served on on-site teams.

Accredited agencies—27.

1971 U.S. Commissioner of Education officially recognized NAC as the reliable authority on quality of schools it accredits.

National Rehabilitation Association noted CSAVR action and voted support of principle of independent, voluntary accreditation of rehabilitation facilities.

Library of Congress published *Standards for Production of Reading Materials* in braille for regional library system.

Award to James F. Garrett, assistant administrator, Social and Rehabilitation Services, DHEW.

Accredited agencies—39. Reported services to almost 75,000 persons (of whom 25,000 received prevention-of-blindness services). Included workshops, schools, camps, clinics, rehabilitation centers, publishing units, libraries, residences.

1972 Peter J. Salmon elected NAC president. Arthur L. Brandon president emeritus.

First 32 agencies to complete self-studies showed 557 changes in function and structure, personnel administration, and social services resulting from the accreditation process.

Dr. Berthold Lowenfeld, educational innovator for the blind, received NAC Award.

Accredited agencies—47. Served more than

140,000 persons (including 78,000 for prevention of blindness) through 129 installations in 34 states and District of Columbia.

1973 Daniel D. Robinson elected president.

Board meeting as well an annual meeting opened to interested observers.

Commission on Standards began systematic updating of standards.

Commission on Accreditation tested materials for reaccreditation.

NAC Award to Marjorie Hooper, former editor, American Printing House for the Blind.

Accredited agencies—52. Included 14 schools and eight state rehabilitation agencies.

1974 First eight agencies reaccredited.

Standards for physical facilities and vocational services revised.

Special membership meeting mapped plans for greater consumer involvement in policy-making, standards development, accreditation process.

NAC Awards to J. Kenneth Cozier, Cleveland industrialist; J. Arthur Johnson, executive director, Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, Washington, D.C.

Alexander F. Handel, executive director since NAC's founding, retired.

Accredited agencies—55 in 36 states and the District of Columbia.

1975 Louis H. Rives, Jr., administrator, Arkansas Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired, elected president.

Richard W. Bleecker executive director.

Report of in-depth study of project, supported by Rehabilitation Services Administration, on extent to which NAC accreditation improved services—showed many verified advances.

Congressman John Brademas in *Congressional Record* praised NAC for upgrading programs for blind and visually handicapped Americans.

General Council of Workshops for the Blind and National Industries for the Blind voted to phase out certification of workshops and help shops qualify for NAC accreditation.

Accredited agencies—59.

1976 (to July 15) Loyal E. Apple, executive director, AFB, commended NAC; pledged all possible support. Called on other agencies to do likewise.

U.S. Commissioner of Education renewed official recognition of NAC.

Accredited agencies—63. Served more than 300,000 persons through 188 installations in 157 communities of 39 states and District of Columbia.

Commission on Accreditation

OTIS H. STEPHENS
Professor of Political Science
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tenn.

Chairperson

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Division of Services for the Blind
Indiana Rehabilitation Services
Indianapolis, Ind.

Vice-Chairperson

SAMUEL J. COLE, Superintendent
Governor Morehead School for the Blind
Raleigh, N.C.

HOWARD H. HANSON
Assistant Program Administrator
Office of Service to the Visually Impaired
Pierre, S.D.

1975-76

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Cincinnati Association for the Blind
Cincinnati, Ohio

RUTH KAARLELA, Assistant Director
Program for Training Rehabilitation Teachers
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Mich.

ELIZABETH M. MALONEY
Associate Executive Director for Services
The Industrial Home for the Blind
Brooklyn, N.Y.

AUSTIN G. SCOTT, Executive Director
Dallas County Association for the Blind
Dallas, Texas

DEAN W. TUTTLE, Associate Professor
School of Special Education and Rehabilitation
University of Colorado
Greeley, Colo.

Commission on Standards

MRS. HELEN W. WORDEN
Retired Executive Director
Rhode Island Association for the Blind
Providence, R.I.

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Management and Organizational Behavior
University of Missouri
St. Louis, Mo.

JOHN M. CRANDELL, Jr., Associate Professor
Department of Educational Psychology
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

CLEO B. DOLAN,, Executive Director
Cleveland Society for the Blind
Cleveland, Ohio

1975-76

RALPH L. HOAG, Superintendent
Arizona State School for the Deaf and the Blind
Tucson, Ariz.

J. ARTHUR JOHNSON, Consultant
Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind
Washington, D.C.

GERALDINE T. SCHOLL
Professor of Special Education
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Mich.

DONALD H. WEDEWER, Director
Office of Blind Services
State of Florida
Tallahassee, Fla.

National Committee for Advancement of Standards

1976

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Director, Harris Trust and Savings Bank
Chicago, Ill.

Chairperson

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Virginia Commission for the
Visually Handicapped
Richmond, Va.

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Cincinnati Association for the Blind
Cincinnati, Ohio

ROY KUMPE, Executive Director
Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind
Little Rock, Ark.

JOSEPH J. LARKIN, Executive Director
The Industrial Home for the Blind
Brooklyn, N.Y.

DAVID L. SCHNAIR, Executive Director
Blinded Veterans Association of New York
New York, N.Y.

J. M. WOOLLY, Superintendent
Arkansas School for the Blind
Little Rock, Ark.

National Accreditation Council

for Agencies Serving the Blind
and Visually Handicapped

79 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10016 (212) 683-8581

President's Council

(past presidents)

ARTHUR L. BRANDON 1967-72
PETER J. SALMON 1972-73
DANIEL D. ROBINSON 1973-75

NAC is a member of the
President's Committee on
Employment of the Handicapped
and the Council of
Specialized Accrediting Agencies.

A not-for-profit organization,
NAC is supported by contributions,
grants and dues.
Contributions to NAC are
tax-deductible.

Accreditation by NAC
signifies that an agency
or school meets
nationally accepted standards
for quality services
to blind and
visually handicapped
Americans,
responsible management, and
ethical fund raising.

Executive Director
RICHARD W. BLEECKER, Ed.D

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*As of June 30, 1976

